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UNCLAS PRETORIA 001278

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/EPS AND AF/S/TCRAIG AND KGAITHER  
DEPT FOR EB/TRA/AN/CDEMARS, LFAUX-GABLE, ESMITH  
TRANSPORTATION FOR SMCERMOTT, KBHATIA, GRETCH  
STATE PASS TO TSA/JHALINSKI

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [FAIR](#) [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [PREL](#) [SF](#)

SUBJECT: SAA ADDS WASHINGTON ROUTES

1. (U) SUMMARY. South African Airways (SAA) will begin offering four weekly flights between Johannesburg and Washington D.C. as of July 1. A codeshare agreement with United is in the works while the future of the existing SAA-Delta codeshare has yet to be determined. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) South African Airways (SAA) announced March 14 that it was adding direct, one-stop service between Johannesburg and Washington D.C. (Dulles). SAA Manager for International Affairs Darren Hays told Econoff that the service would begin July 1, 2005. He said four flights a week will be offered initially with the intention of eventually expanding the route to a daily service.

3. (U) SA207 to Washington, via Accra, will depart from Johannesburg at 18:40 on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays and will arrive in Washington at 6:45 the next day. SA208 will leave Washington on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays at 08:45 via Accra and will arrive in Johannesburg the next morning at 07:40. SAA will use eight Boeing 747-400s to service this route.

4. (U) Hays said that as of this moment there has been no decision on which U.S. airline will codeshare with SAA on this flight. He conceded, however, that SAA is working with United Airlines to finalize a codeshare agreement in line with SAA's recent initiation into the Star Alliance. Delta currently codeshares on all SAA flights to the United States.

5. (U) Although SAA officials have previously indicated to Econoff that SAA would like to keep its Atlanta service, Hays said that no decision has been made yet on the future of SAA flights into Atlanta. In July 2004, Star Alliance VP for Corporate Affairs Chris Klick was quoted as saying that although the Alliance would prefer collaboration among member airlines, it would not demand that new alliance members relinquish deals with other airlines. This may allow SAA to continue to leverage its existing codeshare arrangement with Delta on its Atlanta flights. Delta Manager for Southern Africa Margaret Copeland told Econoff that Delta has yet to receive any indication from SAA that it will terminate the codeshare agreement with Delta.

FRAZER